

Example “Big Ideas” in Social Studies

- Competing forces tend to shape compromise solutions.
- The exercise of authority requires accountability and justification.
- Historical events are not isolated; they are complex and have consequences.
- Competent historical research requires the location and interpretation of documentary evidence.
- Changes that occur as a result of global action are different from those that occur as result of a single nation’s actions.
- Every individual deserves just and reasoned treatment.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Social Studies cont.

- For a variety of motives, nations and individuals seek to expand their influence, which has intended and unintended consequences.
- The ability to create and interpret maps allows us to move through the world effectively.
- Throughout history, humans have struggled to fit the environment to their needs \approx sometimes successfully, sometimes not.
- A national and global citizen must be able to assess the most appropriate form of government for a community.
- A successful democracy depends on the participation of its citizens.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Math

- Multiple strategies and tools exist for completing a calculation.
- Some strategies are more efficient than others.
- Operations can be reversed using their inverses.
- Relations and functions can be represented numerically, graphically, algebraically, and/or verbally.
- The properties of functions and function operations are used to model and analyze real-world applications and quantitative relationships.
- Some numerals represent the exact desired value; others represent only an approximation of the desired value.
- A measurement consists of a number, a unit, and an implied precision.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Math cont.

- Relations between shapes are powerful analytic tools
- Mathematics uses numbers and other symbols to describe abstractions of real world phenomena. 5. Both mathematical abstractions and mathematical applications can be beautiful.
- How data is gathered impacts its validity.
- People make important decisions based on information conveyed by statistics.
- Statistics are frequently used to support a point of view.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Science

- Good evidence is characterized by accurate observations and measurements made during an investigation.
- Scientific explanations must be based on credible evidence.
- Communicating results of scientific investigations requires specificity and clarity.
- Science is an ongoing process of questioning and knowledge acquisition.
- Our ability to predict is limited by our current knowledge and technology.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Science cont.

- Building and testing models is a useful process to understand and predict the behavior of systems.
- Systems behave in an orderly and predictable way.
- There is constant tension between change and balance over time.
- Life is characterized by continuity and diversity.
- All matter has a basic structure that determines its properties and its interactions with other matter.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” English

- Speakers make decisions based on audience, purpose, and form.
- A reader’s experience influence his/her interpretation of a work of literature.
- Non-fiction is the language of reality while fiction is the language of possibility.
- Ideas are made complete by substantiation.
- Writers learn to write by writing. Readers learn to read by reading.
- Reading and writing are reciprocal processes, which support one another. Readers actively construct meaning, while writers actively communicate meaning.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Media

- Effective use of electronic media requires critical evaluation.
- The ability to access and manipulate electronic media is a central skill for communication and scholarship.
- Media presentations reveal multiple intelligences at work.
- Knowledge of media, materials, and techniques empowers us to make choices and express ourselves.
- Raising questions about the authority, context, and accuracy of a resource is central to using information ethically.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Drama

- Portraying a range of characters encourages understanding of self.
- Writers structure the language of their characters' speeches in order to convey the emotional or mental states of the characters.
- Understanding how writers use specific language structures can help actors unlock the emotional depth of the characters they play.
- Successful communication requires an understanding of alternate points of view.
- The process of group creation teaches the unique potential of compromise and artistic collaboration.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Foreign Language

- Language is not an end in itself, but rather it is a vehicle for relating to the rest of the world through learning and sharing information
- The study of other languages and cultures gives people insight into their own culture comparison and supports the appreciation of diversity, which is vital to a global society.
- Learning languages is about making connections: linking thoughts, peoples, cultures, and ideas.
- Comprehension and interpretation of a second language facilitates the acquisition of information about the world outside our experiences.
- Formal language is a necessary tool for expressing precise ideas in a variety of environments.
- Understanding the strategies people use to communicate builds independent learners.
- Implicit in language study is the recipient audience: different audiences require the use of different language skills.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Visual Arts

- The human need to make art is met through the development of skill and understanding.
- There are many ways to reach an artistic solution.
- Art doesn't just happen: it involves a creative process from beginning to end. .
- Art involves a determined, reflective, creative process from idea to exhibition.
- Skills in criticism are essential for effective communication
- We communicate through our images; we articulate through our visual arts vocabulary.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Music

- Singing is a fundamental form of expression that connects all human beings socially and emotionally in every culture.
- Music literacy fosters musical independence
- Improvisation and composition create musical ideas.
- Critical Response raises the level of understanding and expression in music.

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Example “Big Ideas” in Computer Science

- How data is stored/represented/organized has consequences/ tradeoffs in speed of access and transmittal, robustness and detail, and space.
- A mental model of a computer is essential for diagnosis of problems.
- Different languages encourage different paradigms and have different vocabulary and syntax.
- A large problem can be made simpler by breaking it into smaller pieces
- An interface influences who uses computers and how.
- The ease of posting, transferring, and copying information with the computer and the Internet requires that users be cautious in accepting its validity.
- Computer technology plays a major role in our modern economy.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA

Example “Big Ideas” in Health & P.E.

- Understanding how your body works is important in maintaining optimal health.
- You are what you eat.
- Personal hygiene is the foundation for disease prevention.
- Abuse of substances will always lead to negative outcomes.
- Movement is the core of kinesthetic awareness.
- Mastery is the result of thoughtful practice.
- Physical fitness is a journey, not a destination.

Source: Weston Public Schools, MA